

Fact Sheet: HB12-1232, Colorado Recovering Warrior Fishing License Program

Sponsors: Representative McLachlan; Senator King

This legislation will authorize a program of free fishing licenses for the active duty military who have been transferred to the Warrior Transition Battalion (WTB) at Fort Carson, Colorado. There are currently about 250 such active duty servicemen and women in the WTB. The bill does not address the approximately 600 additional wounded active duty military who remain assigned to their units while receiving medical therapy.

In 2010, Governor Ritter signed SB10-2011 an act that provided active-duty wounded service personnel free big game licenses. In addition, the State has several other hunting and fishing benefits for severely disabled Colorado veterans and active duty military who are Colorado residents. All of these programs taken together have an insignificant impact on the DOW cash funded budget, which earns over \$100 million from license sales.

One group established to help active duty servicemen and servicewomen is Project Healing Waters, a cooperative venture often allied with Trout Unlimited. Project Healing Waters has grown from a single chapter serving patients at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, DC, to nearly 100 chapters throughout the United States.

Fishing is a peaceful, collegial activity that can take place practically year round in Colorado. With Project Healing Waters, recovering military personnel are paired with volunteers who act as guides and who become mentors and friends.

While extending free fishing to members the Warrior Transition Battalion in Colorado may not impact a large number of active duty service men and women, it will express a strong principal about how Coloradoans believe our natural resources should be used to support those in need who have supported our nation with their courage and devotion to duty.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

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